

NNNNVT KSB356MJC416
RR RUQMRB
DE RUSBLK #7318 2761119
ZNY CCCCC ZZB
R 031108Z OCT 79
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASEDC 5879
INFO RUSBQD/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 9396
RUZEMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1961
RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 7463
RUQMRB/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 234
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L K337L 7318

PCI
CHG
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Poc AF64

E.O. 12865: GDS 14/3/95 (AMSTETZ, J. REUCE) OR-M
TAGS: PINT 4F JR
SUBJ: SOVIET OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON STATUS OF TARAKI AND THE
PURGED MILITARY OFFICER CABINET MINISTERS

1. (C-ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY. A SOVIET EMBASSY OFFICIAL DESCRIBES TARAKI AS
BEING HELD A PRISONER ALONE IN THE PEOPLE'S PALACE COMPLEX,
AND THAT TARAKI ALONG WITH THE THREE RECENTLY PURGED
MINISTERS (WATANJAR, GULABZOI AND MAZDOORIAN) HAVE BEEN
EXPELLED FROM THE PARTY. END SUMMARY.

3. AT THE AIRPORT TODAY, I RAN INTO SOVIET COUNSELOR VILTOR
G. OSADCHII, WHO WAS IN THE VIP LOUNGE (A RARE PRIVILEGE)
AWAITING EMBARCATION ON AN AEROFLOT FLIGHT TO MOSCOW. (THE
IMPORTANCE OF OSADCHII, AND THAT OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY, WAS
UNDERLINED BY HIS BEING ALLOWED TO USE THE VIP LOUNGE
FOR A VACATION TRIP TO THE USSR, WHICH PRIVILEGE IS
SOMETIMES DENIED TO MOST AMBASSADORS EXCEPT WHEN THEY
FIRST ARRIVE OR LEAVE PERMANENTLY.)

4. OSADCHII HAS ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF THE FRIENDLIEST AND
MOST OPEN OF SOVIET OFFICIALS HERE, AND I SEIZED THE
OPPORTUNITY TO ASK HIM SOME QUESTIONS. HIS ANSWERS
WERE, I THINK, WORTH RECORDING:

-- TARAKI IS BEING HELD A PRISONER "ALONE" IN THE PEOPLE'S
PALACE COMPLEX (WHERE PRESIDENT HAFIZULLAH AMIN ALSO LIVES);
THE IMPLICATION BEING THAT HIS FAMILY IS NOT WITH HIM. HE IS
DEFINITELY ALIVE AND WAS NOT WOUNDED BY ANY WEAPON. WHEN I
ASKED OSADCHII ABOUT A RUMOR THAT TARAKI MIGHT BE GOING TO
MOSCOW FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT, OSADCHII REPLIED, "POSSIBLY
LATER BUT NOT RIGHT NOW."
-- HE IGNORED MY INQUIRY ABOUT THE EXACT STATE OF
TARAKI'S HEALTH.

-- EX-MINISTERS WATANJAR, GULABZOI AND MAZDOORIAN
ARE AT LARGE, BUT OSADCHII PROFESSED NOT TO KNOW THEIR EXACT
WHEREABOUTS. HE SAID THERE WAS A RUMOR THAT THEY HAD ESCAPED
TO A NEIGHBORING COUNTRY. WHEN I ASKED IF HE MEANT THE SOVIET
UNION, HE CUCKLED AND SAID: "POSITIVELY NOT. IF THEY HAD,
WE WOULD NOT KEEP THAT A SECRET. AFTER ALL, WE ARE NOT
DENYING THAT BABRAK KAMAL IS LIVING IN PRAGUE."

-- WHEN I OBSERVED THAT WE HAD JUST HEARD THAT TARAKI AND
THE THREE EX-MINISTERS HAD BEEN EXPELLED FROM THE PARTY,
OSADCHII REPLIED, "THAT IS CORRECT."

5. OSADCHII SAID THAT HE WAS GOING TO MOSCOW FOR CONSUL-
TATIONS AND THEN FOR A MONTH'S HOLIDAY IN THE CRIMEA.
HE SAID HE WAS WORKING OUT AND THAT THE LOCAL POLITICAL
SITUATION HAD MADE HIS WORK DIFFICULT. AS WE SEPARATED,
HE SAID SOPHLY, "WE NEVER KNOW WHAT TOMORROW WILL BRING
HERE."

AMSTUTZ

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